



PICKLEWEED POST

Friends of San Pablo Bay National Wildlife Refuge Newsletter

VOLUME 14

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Friends Raising Funds for Refuge Shade Structure



The Friends of San Pablo Bay National Wildlife Refuge would like to provide a shade structure for the Refuge near the office. The office is located on the south side of Highway 37 near the intersection of Lakeville Highway. It is surrounded by hay fields and cattle grazing pastures, therefore, the refuge does not have adequate natural shade for visitors.

The Refuge would like to enhance the outdoor space for visitors by providing protection from the sun. A shade structure would help keep everyone cool and can help prevent sunburns, heat exhaustion and other sun-related ailments. A shade structure would provide a place for:

1. Environmental education events for local school groups, scout groups, and others
2. Interpretive talks and tours for groups and other visitors
3. Training and orientation for volunteers
4. Meeting space for Refuge staff and partners
5. A shady place for lunch for all others visiting the refuge

Currently, the Refuge has no space to gather groups in an outdoor setting without the risks associated with the sun's heat and UV rays. A shade structure would provide the venue needed for the Refuge and partners (such as Sonoma Land Trust) to bring visitors to the refuge to experience their National Wildlife Refuge.

You can support the Friends of San Pablo National Wildlife Refuge in their effort to raise funds to purchase a shade structure by making a one-time donation or by becoming a member. Please see the back page for information.

Opportunities for Visitors to the San Pablo Bay National Wildlife Refuge

Wildlife Viewing

The Cullinan Ranch Trail, Sonoma Baylands Trail, Sears Point Trails, and the Tolay Creek Trail and habitats surrounding the San Pablo Bay National Wildlife Refuge offer ample opportunities to see wildlife. Situated along the Pacific Flyway, the region where birds migrate through western United States, the refuge and the estuary is an important wintering area for waterfowl, particularly canvasbacks, scaup, and scoters. Shorebirds also use the area to overwinter or as a stopover point during migration.

Special group tours are also available to Skaggs Island. Skaggs Island is a great place to see several species of raptors, and the occasional black-tailed deer. Contact the refuge manager if you would like to schedule a group tour.

Interpretation

Refuge System interpretation programs provide opportunities for visitors to make their own connections to the natural world. From self-guided walks to ranger-led programs, many national wildlife refuges help visitors learn more about the wildlife and habitat behind the landscapes.

In addition to staff and volunteers presenting programs to audiences, refuges use a variety of exhibits, signs, brochures, and electronic media to communicate natural history stories to visitors. Printed and virtual information is often available on many topics, including plants and animals, seasonal migrations, habitats, refuge management strategies, and endangered species.

Environmental Education

National Wildlife Refuges serve many purposes, and one of our most important roles is as outdoor classrooms to teach about wildlife and natural resources. Many refuges offer environmental education programs for a variety of audiences. Refuges provide unique and exciting outdoor environments – excellent locations for hands-on learning activities. Thousands of youth and adult groups visit every year to learn about a specific topic on wildlife, habitat, or ecological processes.

Is your school, youth, environmental or other group interested in learning more about the wildlife, plants, habitats and ecology of a particular national wildlife refuge? Contact the refuge manager for more information. Refuges are wild places, and we want to teach you more about them!

Boating

Human-powered crafts offer wildlife watching from a different perspective. An accessible boat launch designed for kayaks and canoes is available at the Cullinan Ranch Unit. A gravel boat ramp for launching canoes and kayaks is available at Sears Point. Please be aware that these areas are tidal and caution is necessary when navigating through the breeches.

Photography

Perhaps the fastest growing activity on national wildlife refuges in the past ten years has been wildlife photography. That's not surprising – the digital camera population explosion and cell phones with ever-improving picture-taking abilities are increasing the number of nature photographers at a rapid rate. You don't need to purchase expensive equipment or have any experience to get started. A small camera or basic cell phone will do just fine for most visitors. Wildlife photography is a high-priority activity in the Refuge System. We welcome beginning and expert photographers alike to record their outdoor adventures on film, memory card or internal hard drive!

Fishing

In addition to the conservation of wildlife and habitat, the Refuge System offers a variety of quality fishing opportunities. Fishing programs promote understanding and appreciation of natural resources and their management on all lands and waters in the Refuge System. Currently, fishing is available in the open bay and navigable sloughs of San Pablo Bay National Wildlife Refuge. There is also a fishing pier located at the parking lot of Cullinan Ranch. Boat ramps are available at the Vallejo public marina and at the Hudeman Slough Boat Launch, located at 28020 Skaggs Island Road in Sonoma.

Upcoming Events

Raptors with Larry Broderick at Skaggs Island

Sunday, Mar 18, 2018

10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.

Sonoma Land Trust's expert guide, Larry Broderick, will lead you on a raptor walk to learn about identification and behavior on Skaggs Island, a normally closed unit of San Pablo Bay National Wildlife Refuge. Tour will consist of walking a few miles on mostly flat ground. Go to <https://sonomalandtrust.org/outings> to register. Directions will be emailed to you once registered.

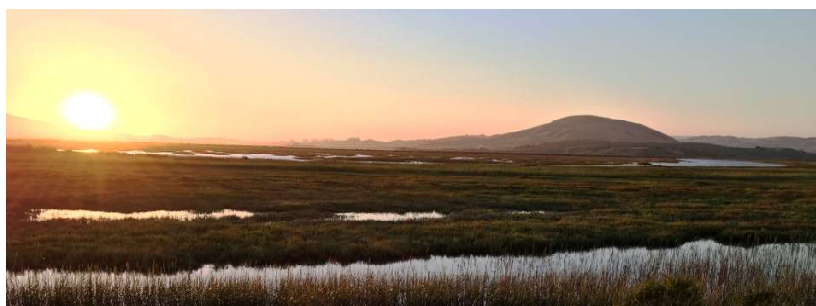


Upcoming Events Continued

Yukon Flats National Wildlife Refuge is coming to....



...the San Pablo Bay National Wildlife Refuge.



Heather Bartlett, Wildlife Refuge Specialist from the Yukon Flats National Wildlife Refuge, will be visiting our refuge on Saturday, April 14th. Planned activities include a presentation about Yukon Flats NWR and a Skaggs Island Bike Ride. Contact our headquarters for details:

**7715 Lakeville Highway
Petaluma, CA 94954
707-769-4200**



We gratefully acknowledge Hanford ARC's continuing support of the Friends. Their 2017 year end contribution of \$3,000 provides a super start to the \$15,000 goal for the shade structure and benches.

Yes, I would like to make a contribution or join the Friends and help protect the wildlife and support the Refuges.

Please fill out, enclose with your donation and mail to:

**Friends of the San Pablo Bay NWR
7715 Lakeville Highway
Petaluma, CA 94954
707-769-4200**

- | | | |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|----------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Pickleweed Pal | \$25 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Marsh Wren | \$50 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Clapper Rail | \$100 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Harvest Mouse Helper | \$250 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Great Blue Heron Hero | \$500 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Saltmarsh Sponsor | \$1,000 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | White Pelican Patron | \$2,500 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Tidal Marsh Mentor | \$5,000 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Great Egret Guardian | \$10,000 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Baylands Benefactor | \$25,000 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Other | \$ _____ |

☐ **I would like to make a one-time contribution of \$**

☐ **I am interested in becoming a Friends Board Member**

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Telephone _____

Email Address _____

Signature _____

Thank You!

Your membership/contribution is tax deductible.